Purchase of edible Oils by NDDB

515. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the quantity of vegetable oils and their values purchased by NDDB so far this year in pursuance of its market intervention scheme;

(b) whether the NDDB is seeking help of any private agencies for its procurement operations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): (a) to (c) NDDB and seven State Cooperative Marketing Federations financed by NDDB have purchased oilseeds and edible oils of the value of Rs. 300 crores so far in pursuance of its market intervention scheme. Since edible oil is known to be a speculative commodity and since NDDB has a responsibility to maintain wholesale prices at a reasonable level in the lean season, it is not considered expedient in the public interest to indicate at present the quantity of oilseeds and oils purchased by NDDB.

In the course of market intervention operation, NDDB make use of not only the cooperatives but also normal private marketing channels for securing efficient and speedy operations in the interests of the farmers.

Agricultural production without use of pesticides

516. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the members of the National Core Group on Agriculture have suggested that the goal of sustainable agricultural production should be achieved without the use of pesticides as the failure of pesticides to control pests has been established; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) The recently held meeting of the National Core Group on Pesticides Problems and Alternatives, organised by Voluntary Health Association of India is reported to have felt that pesticides have failed to control many pests, and therefore, the country should move towards the goal of sustainable agricultural production without pesticides.

(b) The Government has enacted the Insecticide Act, 1968. Under the provisions of the said Act, no pesticide is allowed to be imported or manufactured in the country without having been registered for this purpose. A pesticide is registered for use only after satisfying on its efficacy and safety based on scientific evaluation. Pesticide which are recommended for use are effective in controlling pests if used as per the prescribed package of practices. However, in few cases wherever the continued use of a pesticide induces either resistance/resurgence in a pest, other methods of pest control including the use of alternate pesticides are recommended.

Pavement Dwellers in big Cities

517. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over 2.5 million people in the country spend their entire lives on pavements in the big cities; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to provide shelter to the pavement dwellers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) As per the 1981 Census, the total number of urban houseless population in the country was 0.61 million including 0.16 million in the 12 metropolitan cities.